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Four Charged with Plot to Blow Up N.Y. Meeting

Police Seize Weapons, Ammo in Raids

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By ARTHUR EVERETT

NEW YORK (AP) — Four Bronx men were arrested as bold but bumbling right-wing terrorists Wednesday, and police raiders claimed to have seized an arsenal of rifles, grenades, dynamite, an antitank and submachine gun and 250,000 rounds of ammunition.

The four were charged with a plot to blow up a Bronx meeting addressed by Herbert Aptheker, an American Communist leader who in 1965 made an unauthorized visit to Hanoi.

But the bomb that was planted exploded two days too late.

Burton Roberts, chief assistant district attorney, called the defendants a "disorganized group of rugged individualists, misguided in thinking they were working for an American ideal."

LITERATURE FOUND

Bronx Dist. Atty. Isidor Dollinger said the raids turned up literature of the John Birch Society, the National Renaissance Party, the Minutemen and the Black Muslims.

Police undercover agents working on the Aptheker bomb case were said to have learned that the defendants were planning a subsequent bombing of the Bronx headquarters of a federal antipoverty agency.

Police with search warrants carried out midnight to dawn raids on homes and business places of the defendants.

Authorities said they seized 18 sticks of dynamite, two cans of black powder, one plastic bomb, 102 blasting caps, 45 rifles, seven shotguns, 14 pistols, one antitank gun, one submachine gun, one gun disguised as a cane, three hand grenades, 12 hunting knives, one machete and the ammunition.

Headquarters of the group was said by police to be a sporting goods store in the Bronx operated by one of the defendants, George Colitto, 52. Colitto, Peter Psyras, 37, a luncheonette owner, and Michael Mikulik, 37, a postal worker, were charged with attempted murder, conspiracy to commit murder, possession of explosives and violation of the weapons law.

FOURTH DEFENDANT

A fourth defendant, Warren Hoy, 40, a city Parks Department employe, was charged with conspiracy to use a bomb.

Roberts said Colitto and Mikulik described themselves as members of the John Birch Society.

According to Roberts, the bomb that went off too late was planted in the second-floor Allerton Community and Social Center in the Bronx, where Aptheker addressed a meeting June 13. The bomb went off June 15, blowing a hole in the ceiling but injuring no one.

Aptheker heads the American Institute for Marxist Studies and is regarded as the leading theoretician of the Communist party in America. He blamed what he called "Fascist elements" in the purported bomb plot.

"This is the third or fourth time of my being a physical target," Aptheker said. "I take these things very seriously."